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Bujangga Manik: or, Java in the fifteenth century: an edition and study of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Jav. b. 3 (R)

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Stellingen behorende bij het proefschrift 'Bujangga Manik: or, Java in the Fifteenth Century' door Alexander Joseph West

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1. Sequential lists of place names, as found throughout *Bujangga Manik*, are a common trope in Malayo-Polynesian literatures and may be considered part of MP-speakers' phylogenetic inheritance.
2. *Bujangga Manik*'s narrative structure is principally 'indigenous' (in the sense of 'non-Indianised'), although the poem appears to have been the result of a fusion of local Sundanese and Hindu concepts.
3. The grapheme inventories of Old Sundanese scripts appear to have been deliberately curated, removing graphemes unnecessary for the representation of the sounds of the Old Sundanese language. The forms of many graphemes also appear to have been deliberately standardised for writing on *lontar*; at the very least the MS Jav. b.3. (R) script presents a certain uniformity in aspect and ductus across graphemes.
4. *Nusa* in Old Sundanese (and Old Javanese) referred to both islands and political entities. Expressions such as *Nusa Cina* do not imply that China was thought to be (what speakers of European languages might think of as) an island, but rather that – *pace* Zoetmulder's *Old Javanese-English Dictionary* (1982) – the primary meaning of the word *nusa* was not 'island'.
5. 'Javan' (as opposed to 'Javanese') is a useful adjective for referring to the island of Java and its flora, fauna, and human inhabitants.
6. Historians and philologists should pay more attention to the effects of the Columbian Exchange in island Southeast Asia.
7. The term 'medieval' can and should mean 'Afro-Eurasia in the millennium or so before the onset of the Columbian Exchange in 1492', explicitly including island Southeast Asia, which was an integral part of the Afro-Eurasian cultural-economic space at the time.

8. The term ‘Maritime Silk Road’ is commonly deployed when describing ancient and medieval trade on the Indian Ocean and South China Sea. It is, however, an inappropriate phrase: the markedness of the term implies that maritime trade was a subset of overland (‘Silk Road’) commerce, when in fact far greater volumes and ranges of commodities were traded by sea (then as now).
9. When the 1513 Portuguese expedition arrived in Java, Sunda was probably the largest polity on the island by land area. Sunda was a significant kingdom between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, with literature produced and copied locally in at least two languages; it was not simply a mountainous backwater.
10. We need more editions and translations of old Southeast Asian texts. Outside of Indonesia one is unlikely to come across recent translations or editions of works in Old Javanese or Classical Malay (let alone Old Sundanese) in bookshops or libraries. Chinese, Arabic, and Sanskrit texts translated into English (and other languages) are found relatively easily. How can we expect people outside Southeast Asia to be interested in and knowledgeable about the region when its literature and history are inaccessible to all but the most persistent readers?

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